

# **Well Contractor Certification Frequently Asked Questions for the 2014 – 2016 Certification Period**

## **When does the current certification period end?**

*Your Well Contractor Certification Period ends on June 30 of every even year. The end of the 2014-2016 Well Contractor Certification period is June 30, 2016.*

## **What do I have to do to maintain my certification?**

- 1. You must follow the statutes of the Code of Iowa and the rules of the Iowa Administrative Code – both referencing contractor certification and well services.*
- 2. Earn, track and report the proper number of contact hours based on your level of certification for each certification period.*
- 3. Pay your certification renewal fee in a timely manner.*
- 4. Notify the Operator Certification Department of any changes in your contact information.*

## **How many contact hours do I need to maintain my Well Contractor Certification?**

Certified Well Drillers	1.6 CEU or 16 Contact hours
Combination Certified Pump Installer/Well Driller	1.6 CEU or 16 Contact hours
Certified Pump Installers	1.0 CEU or 10 Contact hours

## **What are CEUs?**

*Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are a method for the recognition and documentation of a professional well contractor's learning activities which they seek out after they have completed their initial certification. Continual educational is the means by which contractors can maintain and improve the skills and knowledge necessary to provide high standards in the construction of water supply wells and delivery of well services. Participation in continuing education is an important activity that contributes to high standards of excellence in the water supply well services field and the development of new areas of contractor specialization.*

## **What is 1.0 CEU equal to in training contact hours?**

*CEUs equal a set number of hours. 1 CEU = 10 training contact hours*

## **What is the last date in the certification period that I can earn contact hours and have them qualify toward my current certification requirement?**

*For the current certification period, all qualifying contact hours must be earned by March 31 of each even numbered year. For the 2016 renewal the last day you can earn CEU contact hours that count towards the 2016 renewal is March 31, 2016.*

### **What happens if I do not obtain enough CEU contact hours to qualify for certification renewal?**

*If you do not have not earned enough hours for certification renewal, you have two options:*

- 1. Pay a testing fee, pass the required testing, and pay a \$1000.00 recertification fee.*
- 2. Do not operate as a Well Contractor within Iowa for a complete certification period (2 years) and then you will be allowed to pay a testing fee and when you pass the required testing, you can pay the normal certification fees. If you choose this option you must earn CEUs effective immediately upon recertification because you do not qualify for the “newly certified (previously uncertified)” status as stated in IAC 567-82.11(1).*

### **Who is responsible for tracking my CEU contact hours?**

*Many training providers take the necessary steps to accurately track and submit contact hours for the training events they offer to well contractors to the department directly, but ultimately it is your responsibility as a Certified Well Contractor to maintain an accurate record of the training events you have attended that fulfill your CEU requirement. You must also make sure your CEU contact hours are reported to Iowa DNR Water Supply.*

### **What constitutes an “accurate record” of training events?**

*You need to keep an official copy of the event promotional flyers, meeting agendas, abstracts, receipt of payment, etc. for each event that you have attended and plan to claim as earned contact hours. The information should list the day(s) of the event, name of the presentation/workshop/training, the event host, the person(s) giving the event presentation(s), and the length of each event offered for attendance. In addition, you will need to supply a contact name and phone number to verify that you were in attendance the days that you indicate.*

### **Are there going to be training opportunities before the March 31, 2016 deadline?**

*Iowa and the surrounding states have professional organizations that host training seasons at annual conventions and meetings. Most of these events can count toward your CEU requirement and many of these training events take place during the winter months to take advantage of a slower work period for well drilling/servicing in general. Several organizations help promote contractor training by offering periodic contractor training. In Iowa, these organizations include: The Iowa Groundwater Association, the Iowa Water Well Association, and the Iowa Groundwater Association. You should contact the organizations listed at the back of this document to inquire about upcoming training events that may be scheduled before the March 31, 2016 deadline.*

### **What training qualifies toward CEU contact hour requirements?**

*All activities used for continuing education credit must be approved by an accredited college or university, an issuing agency, or by the department, and shall be related to*

*well services, relevant aspects of Iowa groundwater law, well construction, well maintenance, well abandonment practices, well contractor safety (no more than 0.2 CEU = 2 safety contact hours per renewal period), water system maintenance, and Iowa hydrogeologic conditions which protect groundwater and water supplies. Personal growth and business courses can not be used for the fulfillment of your Iowa CEU contact hour requirement.*

**Will my 8 hour safety refresher course count toward my contact hour requirement?**

*You can only claim **2 hours** of safety related training during each two year certification period toward your CEU contact hour requirements. The 8 hour safety refresher courses will not count for any more than 2 contact hours for well contractor certification. Please remember that if you claim 2 contact hours from an OSHA required safety course, you cannot claim any additional safety hours during the two year certification term.*

**Can I check my Well Contractor CEU contact hours that have been submitted on my behalf via the internet?**

*Yes. You can access the contact hours that have been submitted to the DNR on the internet at the following web site:*

<https://programs.iowadnr.gov/opcertweb/pages/opmenu.aspx>

**What can I do if I do not agree with the number of contact hours listed on my “Continuing Education (CEU) Status Report?”**

*You should contact your training provider and determine if they have submitted your hours to the IDNR. If they have not or if you can not contact the provider, you will need to provide proof of your attendance to the training event. Your proof should include any material from the events that are connected each event including but not limited to: receipts for payment, promotional flyers, meeting agendas, and the contact information that will allow us to speak with the event coordinator. Please include any needed phone numbers that allow us to reach you during business hours, e.g. cell phone, business phone, and home phone numbers. Mail the copies of your supporting documents along with a cover letter stating your request to:*

*Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
ATTN: Contractor Certification - Laurie Sharp  
Wallace State Office Building  
502 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309-4611*

**What if I have a hardship that keeps me from earning my CEUs?**

*We understand hardships can happen to anyone – but not all hardships keep you from earning your required CEUs. If you have a qualified medical event that keeps you from*

*performing all work associated with your well services during the majority of the current certification cycle, you should contact us before March 31, 2016 to discuss your circumstances. The department can allow up to 6 months of extra time for you to earn CEUs if your hardship is qualified. Additional conditions do apply – please contact our offices for additional information.*

**I am active Military or National Guard; this creates periods when I cannot fulfill my certification requirements. How do I maintain my certification?**

*If you are active military and are deployed, you are moved to a status called “alternative CEU requirements”. You will be considered to have completed your CEU requirements of the Chapter 82 rules during periods that you are honorably serving on active duty in the military services, or for periods that you are a government employee working as a well contractor AND assigned to duty outside the United States.*

**Can I apply for certification online or pay for my certification renewal on-line?**

*Yes. You can use the following web links to perform these tasks. Please navigate to the following web page:*

*[https://programs.iowadnr.gov/opcertweb/pages/oper\\_search.aspx](https://programs.iowadnr.gov/opcertweb/pages/oper_search.aspx) and choose “Pay for Certificate/Renewal Fees” from the left hand column.*

***Please note***, if you have not already set-up an account with Iowa DNR for this purpose, you will need to do so by choosing “create an account” when you see the log-in page.

**Who are my contacts regarding questions with Well Contractor Certification?**

*Tracking of contractor certification is handled by Operator Certification. For questions about tracking your CEUs you can contact Jane Enfield at (515) 725-0463.*

*General questions about contractor certification and if an upcoming event you want to attend will meet the Department guidelines for contact hours can be answered by Russ Tell (515) 725-0462.*

**What are the dates for the next certification period?**

*Your next certification period starts July 1, 2016 and ends June 30, 2018. CEUs for the 2016-2018 certification period must be earned by March 31, 2018.*

**What happens if I forget to send in my certification renewal fee on time?**

*There is penalty fee of \$100.00 for each 30 days your fee is delinquent. You only have 60 days to pay your fee before you will be required to start over in the certification process and pay a \$1000 recertification fee.*

### **What are the requirements to become a Certified Well Contractor?**

To become a **Certified Well Contractor – Well Driller**, you will need **2 years** and **2000 hours** of verifiable work experience directly associated with well drilling, environmental drilling, deep directional boring, well installation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. You also need to complete an application, pay a testing fee, pass a two part examination and pay a certification fee.

To become a **Certified Well Contractor - Pump Installer**, you will need **2 years** and **1000 hours** of verifiable work experience directly associated with pump installation, pump repair, and well services. You also need to complete an application, pay a testing fee, pass a two part examination and pay a certification fee.

To become a **Certified Well Contractor – Well Driller/Pump Installer**, you will need **2 years** and **2000 hours** of verifiable work experience directly associated with well drilling, environmental drilling, deep directional boring, well installation, rehabilitation reconstruction, in addition to at least one year of verifiable work experience in pump installation, pump repair, and well services. You also need to complete an application, pay a testing fee, pass a three part examination and pay a certification fee.

### **What is a “Provisionally Certified Well Contractor?”**

The category of **Provisionally Certified Well Contractor** allows an employee that does not have enough experience to qualify for full contractor certification a chance to gain experience under the direct supervision of a fully certified well contractor. The fully certified well contractor is required to sign the application form as a consignor and in doing so agrees to be jointly liable for any violation of the rules and liabilities regarding well services provided by the provisionally certified well contractor. To qualify for provisional certification, the employee must have **one half of the verifiable employment and work experience** required for full certification, pay a testing fee, and pass a two or three part test depending on the level of certification desired. A contractor who meets the requirements of provisional certification will be issued a provisional certification for a period of one year. The Provisionally Certified Contractor will be issued a Certified Well Contractor certificate after a period of one year providing that the contractor is in good standing with the department and there has been payment of the appropriate full certification fee.

### **Where can I find the code and rules for contractor certification, well drilling, pump installation, heat loop installation, and well plugging?**

You can find the code that establishes the regulations in the Code of Iowa 455B:

[455B.171](#) – Definitions

[455B.187](#) – Water Well Construction

[455B.188](#) – Provision for Emergency Replacement of Water Wells

[455B.190](#) – Abandoned Wells Properly Plugged

[455B.190A](#) – Well Contractor Certification Program

You can find the rules in the Iowa Administrative Code 567:

**Chapter 38 – Well permitting**

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/ACO/chapter/07-22-2015.567.38.pdf>

**Chapter 39 – Properly Plugging Abandoned Wells**

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/ACO/chapter/07-22-2015.567.39.pdf>

**Chapter 49 – Nonpublic Water Supply Wells**

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/ACO/chapter/07-22-2015.567.49.pdf>

**Chapter 82 – Well Contractor Certification**

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/ACO/chapter/07-22-2015.567.82.pdf>

**Where can I get information regarding the well drilling codes or rules?**

You can contact your local County Health official or call Russ Tell at (515) 725-0462.

**Where can I find access to contractor training that could meet my contact hour requirement in Iowa?**

The professional organizations that support well contractors are a good place to start to look for your training needs. In addition, check with the suppliers of the well products that you use in your business. Many times your suppliers will host training events – especially in the last 6 months of the certification cycle. Listed below are the contact numbers for the some organizations that provide training yearly.

- The National Groundwater Association [www.ngwa.org](http://www.ngwa.org) (800) 551-7379
- The Iowa Water Well Association [www.iwwa.org](http://www.iwwa.org) (515) 248-1558
- The Iowa Groundwater Association [www.igwa.org](http://www.igwa.org) No phone listed
- The Minnesota Water Well Association [www.mwwa.org](http://www.mwwa.org) (800) 332-2104
- The South Dakota Well Drillers Association <http://www.sdwda.org/> (605) 734-6631
- The Nebraska Well Drillers Association [www.nebraskawelldrillers.org](http://www.nebraskawelldrillers.org) (402) 476-0162
- The Missouri Water Well Association [www.salemnet.com/mwwa](http://www.salemnet.com/mwwa) (314) 974-6992
- The Illinois Association of Groundwater Professionals [www.iagp.org](http://www.iagp.org) (815) 973-3000
- The Wisconsin Water Well Association [www.wisconsinwaterwell.com](http://www.wisconsinwaterwell.com) (608) 326-0935